

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **28 March 2023**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Punnetts Town Community Primary School change of age range**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to publish a statutory notice in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School to enable the governing board to take over the management and running of the voluntary run early years provision currently on the school site.**

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) authorise the publication of a statutory notice in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11. The proposal to take effect from 1 September 2023; and**
 - 2) delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to amend the proposal prior to its publication if required.**
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1 Background

1.1 The current voluntary run early years provision, Little Punnetts has been operating on the site of Punnetts Town Community Primary School since February 2014. The current Trustees of Little Punnetts can no longer continue to oversee the management/running of the pre-school and have requested the governing board of Punnetts Town Community Primary School take over the provision. To enable the school to do this the governing board wishes to lower the school's age range from 4-11 to 2-11 with effect from 1 September 2023. The East Sussex Early Years Forecasting model shows a need for early years provision within the village.

1.2 The aim of the proposal is to integrate fully nursery provision into the Early Years Foundation Stage within the school. The governing board wishes to ensure that there will continue to be nursery provision to support the local area and offer high quality early education delivered by experienced and well-trained staff across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The governing board consulted between 10 January and 24 February 2023 on a proposal to lower the school's age range. The governing board consulted with staff, families of children at the school, the local community, and other interested parties.

2.2 By the close of the consultation period, 11 responses had been received. All respondents fully support the school's proposal to lower the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to provide early years provision for children within the village. A full list of responses is available for elected members to view in the Cabinet and Members Rooms at County Hall.

2.3 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools must be in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended) and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (as amended) (the Regulations). The next stage of the process is to publish a statutory notice in relation to the proposal. It is intended that the notice would be published on the Council's consultation hub on Friday 5 May 2023. The notice would also be published in the Sussex Express and posted on the entrances

to the school. A four-week period of representation would follow, giving interested parties a further opportunity to comment on the proposal. The Council has a duty to determine each proposal within two months of the end of the representation period. We anticipate that a final decision on the proposal would be taken at the Lead Member meeting on 21 June 2023.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 In conclusion, we believe the proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary school would meet the need to provide sufficient early years provision to support the local area and offer high quality early education across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

3.2 For this reason, the Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) authorise the publication of a statutory notice in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11. The proposal to take effect from 1 September 2023; and
- 2) delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to amend the proposal prior to its publication if required.

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LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Bob Bowdler

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None